



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY

Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities

www.LWVSSMC.org

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SUMMER 2016

Editor: Bernadette Burns, bernadetteburns362@gmail.com, 408-757-1250

2016 National Convention in Brief

At the LWVUS Convention in Washington, D.C. delegates:

- Adopted the [national program for 2016-2018](#), Campaign for Making Democracy Work, as proposed
- Adopted a [bylaws amendment](#) that removed the citizenship requirement for full League membership
- Adopted a modified [bylaws amendment](#) that, instead of removing the age requirement for full voting League membership as proposed, reduced the age requirement to 16 from 18
- Adopted the proposed [LWVUS budget](#)
- Elected a new [president and board of directors](#) (the first National president from California)
- Approved [six resolutions](#): two on gun safety, one on statehood for the District of Columbia, and three on climate change

Many interesting convention speeches are available online: see [Speeches](#)

SAVE THE DATE

Our **Fall Kickoff** returns to Lida Urbanek's wonderful bucolic setting. We are working on the speaker and topic, but the event date is set: **SATURDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 17**, at 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton.

FROM THE BOARD*

I begin my journey as editor with a new feature—the **quote of the month**. Please send me entertaining or thought-provoking suggestions for future issues culled from the words of political leaders or others. I will start off with one provided by Ellen Hope, from former President George W. Bush, speaking at the Dallas police officers' memorial.

“Too often we judge other groups by their worst examples while judging ourselves by our best intentions.”

Ellen Hope, Lisa Conrad and I attended the National Convention in June. It was all new and interesting to me, especially the extent to which there could be heated discussion—OF BYLAWS!!!

At Convention, one speaker whom I found particularly engaging was Amanda Taube, who provided a fascinating look at what she termed “The Rise of Authoritarianism in America.” Authoritarianism in this social science context refers not to leaders with dictatorial inclinations, but rather a psychological profile of individual voters that is characterized by a strong desire for order, being unsettled by the very concept of change, and distrust of those perceived as ‘others’.

At times of great changes in the social status quo, people with preferences toward authoritarianism feel threatened, and turn toward strong, punitive leaders who target out groups.

Her talk at National <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSkd0SmiXp4>

Her article <http://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>

The backdrop for her lecture was a simple-seeming four-question test developed by political scientist Stanley Feldman, professor at SUNY Stonybrook. They appear to ask about parenting but are in fact designed to reveal how highly the respondent values hierarchy, order, and conformity over other values.

Choose from each pair the quality it is more important for a child to have:

1. independence or respect for elders?
2. obedience or self-reliance?
3. to be considerate or to be well-behaved?
4. curiosity or good manners?

(Explanation on page 9.)

Bernadette Burns, Incoming Editor (with heartfelt thanks to Evan for his many years of editorial service and for all the advice he has provided to get me started on this journey!)

***Editor's Note: "From the Board" is usually written by a different member of the LWVSSMC Board every month.**

From the President:

Dear friends,

I am writing to thank our retiring Voter editor, Evan Hughes, who has done an amazing job over the past several years, and to introduce our new editor, Bernadette Burns, who has volunteered to take over this crucial and challenging part of our work.

Evan, we will miss you – not only your competence, hard work and unfailing good nature, but your depth of League and local knowledge and your words of wisdom on the Board. Bernadette, we welcome you – you will indeed have large shoes to fill, but I believe that your keen intelligence, enthusiasm, and energy are up to the task. We are here to support you and cheer for you as you take up your new duties!

So many thanks to you both,

Ellen

WE'VE LOST OUR LEASE

We have been told by our building manager that we need to VACATE OUR OFFICE BY AUGUST 31. We are looking for a very inexpensive office space. (Our budget currently allows \$385/month for office rent.) We would prefer a secure, easily accessed space, large enough for a small desk or table, a file cabinet and the copy machine, at the minimum. We are willing to share with an appropriate partner.

If you know of such a space, please contact a member of our office committee ASAP: Shirley Des Marais, Lucile Spurlock, Marge Stone, Ellen Hope, or Jack Morris.

A New Life Member

CAROL LOUCHHEIM has reached the milestone 50-year membership marker—and apparently wasn't quite aware of it, as she had to be informed by National! Congratulations to Carol on a lifetime of achievement and service. Now she will be rewarded by no longer having to pay dues.

In Memoriam

Barbara Seaney, longtime member of our League, died May 30. She moved to Oakland some years ago to be closer to her family. In typical League style, she became involved in activities at her retirement facility and served on the residents' board of governors.

When she lived in Menlo Park Barbara was an enthusiastic volunteer for several organizations and a tireless, and fearless, world traveler. One adventure found her lost in Bangkok and riding back to her hotel, zigzagging through traffic, on the back of a bank teller's motor scooter. Many remember her as a dedicated Menlo Park Library volunteer and League office volunteer when our office was in the Library. Her passions were equal rights and justice. She had a quick smile for everyone and a lively sense of humor.

Barbara is survived by a warm and loving family of two brothers, Malcolm and Bill Banks, her four children and their spouses, and 6 grandchildren.

(Thanks to Lucile Spurlock for writing this about Barbara)

Ann Draper informs us that there is an upcoming vacancy on the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) Congestion Management & Environmental Quality (CMEQ) Committee. If anyone is interested, we encourage you to apply. You can get more information at:

<http://ccag.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CMEQ-Public-Member-Recruitment-Jul-2016.pdf>

PROS AND CONS WANTS YOU!!!

There are numerous propositions qualifying for our November ballot. We have 11 Pros & Cons presentations scheduled already and a wonderful group of experienced speakers, but they can only stretch so far. **We need YOU!**

You don't have to be a skilled orator, just be willing to learn about the major propositions from documents we provide. You will share that information with audiences who are eager to hear what you have to say, and will be paired with one of our experienced presenters.

We summarize the propositions in easy-to-understand language and present encapsulated information both supporting and opposing each issue. We answer questions and give resources for further study.

Sometimes this is the only unbiased information voters receive. Training will be **August 15** in Redwood City; please contact Sue Alvarez (sbrock1944@aol.com or 650-364-3077) and join the fun. Also, please let us know **if you have a group that would like to schedule a Pros & Cons presentation** (church/service club/PTA/social group or ???)

Mailing List for *THE VOTER*

If you received a paper copy of this issue of *The VOTER* and do not want it mailed to you, please tell Shirley Des Marais (sdesmarais@pacbell.net). Or, if you want to be mailed a paper copy and did not receive one, please contact Shirley to be added to the mailing list for *The VOTER*.

Editor's note: In case you were wondering what happens with that portion of your dues money which goes to National, here is an example of their advocacy in support of our core values. Winning these crucial court cases is expensive and dependent upon your support.

Voters Won Today: League of Women Voters Prevails in Major Federal Voting Rights Case

07/29/2016 | by Jessica Jones | League of Women Voters | PRESS RELEASE

Politicians have no business standing in the way of our right to vote

Raleigh, NC: The League of Women Voters has just won a major federal voting rights case, reinstating significant rights for North Carolina voters in time for Election Day. The League has been fighting HB 589, an omnibus voter suppression bill designed to limit the rights of voters, especially communities of color, since 2013.

“Democracy wins today. Voters win today. This decision is the latest in a string of major federal rulings that send a clear message: Politicians have no business standing in the way of our right to vote,” said Mary Klenz, co-president of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina, a plaintiff in the case.

“We are grateful to the Court of Appeals for seeing this bill for what it was: a race-based, chilling attempt to silence the voices of eligible voters,” said Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

“As we’ve seen in Wisconsin and Texas, and now North Carolina, federal courts are calling foul on post-Shelby attempts to suppress voters’ rights. Their rulings are loud and clear. Politicians do not control our democracy; voters do,” Carson said.

“With this ruling, League volunteers will be able to get back to what we do best: equipping voters with the information they need to cast a vote this year,” continued Klenz. “We have a lot of work to do to make sure North Carolinians understand how this ruling affects them, and we stand ready to help millions of North Carolinians exercise their most fundamental right to vote.”

The League of Women Voters was represented by the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and the American Civil Liberties Union, and was joined by North Carolina A. Philip Randolph Institute, Onestop Unifour Collaborative, Common Cause North Carolina, and five individuals as plaintiffs on this lawsuit.

BOARD NOTES from the June 6th meeting:

- Palo Alto League will make a video of the Pros and Cons available to the public. Ellen Hope will look into the possibility of joining with them.
- While we are not needed to help in the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce beer booth this year, we have been offered a space at an “information” booth along with other non-profits.
- Ellen Hope asked that Board members review the **Board Policies and Procedures** and submit any suggested changes in writing.
- All appointed Directors and Committee Chairs listed on the Nomination Slate in the Annual Meeting Kit were confirmed. Rita Comes Whitney was also appointed as Board Director for Media Relations.
- Patti Fry reported that the **Ad Hoc Membership Committee** would like to apply to the Stanford Graduate School of Business Alumni Consulting Team (ACT) with the goal of “League Renewal”. The Board consented.
- **Menlo Park General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report**— Concerns were expressed about the short period for comments and the amount of community outreach regarding the General Plan Update's impacts. The Board authorized, through an Emergency Action vote, for creation of a letter expressing these concerns and recommending community workshops, to be presented by LWVSSMC President Ellen Hope at the July 11th Planning Commission meeting.
- **Our Bylaws** were reaffirmed. A committee was formed to discuss possible changes in advance of the 2017 Annual Meeting: Des Marais, Fry, Morris, Hope, and Spurlock. Please contact Ellen Hope or Lucile Spurlock with any input.

Amendments to Bylaws Adopted at LWVUS Convention 2016

League policy requires “consistency” in the first three articles of the bylaws of all Leagues, thus our Bylaws will need to be amended by the Board to reflect two changes adopted at the National Convention: **Voting membership is now open to non-citizens and to individuals 16 years of age or older.**

KEPLER’S “COMMUNITY PARTNERS” INCLUDES OUR LEAGUE

Don’t forget when you are buying books, or anything, at Kepler’s any time of year, to mention the League when you check out. They will donate back to us 6% of the sale. If you make your purchase online through Keplers.com, begin your shopping by clicking Community Partners, then Shop For Your Nonprofit, and then League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County.



Talking Points

First Woman Nominee for President of the United States by a Major Political Party

Q: Does the League have any comment on Secretary Hillary Clinton securing the Democratic Presidential nomination? So the League is endorsing Secretary Clinton?

Several talking points were developed following a lively and frank conversation at the 52nd LWVUS National Convention. They are aimed at people speaking or writing publicly, yet are also suitable for conversation.

- “We fundamentally believe that our democracy works best when all Americans, of all backgrounds, have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of our national political processes. This important moment sends the message that in *this* democracy, women finally are full participants in all aspects of the democratic processes.”
- “The League was founded on a belief in the power of women and the equality of their political voice. Achieving the Presidential nomination of a major political party is another important milestone in that journey to full democratic equality.”
- “This historic achievement is not about *a* particular woman or *a* particular political party. Rather it is a reflection of the fact that our country, the world’s greatest democracy, has realized a momentous goal of which we all can be proud.”
- “Informed participation of all people in our democracy has always been the League’s highest priority. Such participation includes not only voting but also becoming candidates for public office. The League never supports or opposes candidates and we never support or oppose political parties. Rather, our aim is focused on enabling and encouraging all citizens to fully participate so that they can weigh in on the issues that matter most to *them*.”

The full list is available here: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/talking-points-first-woman-nominee-president-major-political-party>

Office Items

If you have left anything in the League office that you'd like to keep, please collect it now. WE HAVE LOST OUR LEASE and must vacate before the end of August. We will store as much as we can, including material needed for League functions, League documents, and historical archives. Other items will be subject to immediate sale or disposal.

Contact Shirley Des Marais or any other member of the Office Committee. (Lucile Spurlock, Marge Stone, Ellen Hope, Jack Morris)

Dues Reminder

You should have received a notice for annual dues of \$75, payable by July 31, 2016. If not, please contact Sharon Sherden, mom@dr-dave.com or 650-368-5617. If you have received your notice, but not yet paid, please do so soon, either electronically at the League website www.lwvssmc.org or by check in the envelope provided.

Public Interest Course: Election 2016

Six-session evening class this fall on Stanford campus presents many well-known guest speakers in a dialogue about this year's rather unusual Presidential election season. Cost is \$260. Full information at: election2016.stanford.edu

Course Description

“So much in the Democratic and Republican primaries consistently defied conventional wisdom and upended the predictions of experts. It seems that the usual rules don't apply this year. Are we seeing a fundamental shift in American politics...a host of profound and ongoing changes in the country? ... What do demographic changes portend for the future, and how long-lived will the resurgence of populism prove to be? [We will] take stock of the health of American democracy. ...”

From Page 3: Responses more indicative of authoritarianism are: respect for elders; obedience; well-behaved; good manners.

**OFFICERS AND CONTACTS FOR OUR LEAGUE
(LWV OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY, 2016-17)**

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ONLY UNTIL AUGUST 31!!!!
League Office: LWVSSMC, 713 Santa Cruz Ave., #9, Menlo Park, CA 94025

650-325-5780 info@LWVSSMC.org

UPCOMING EVENTS		
AUGUST		
8 Mon	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING at Ellen Hope’s. Contact: Ellen Hope, ellenjhope@aol.com
15 Mon	6:30-8 pm	Pros & Cons Training at Sue Alvarez’s, 907 Redwood Avenue, Redwood City. Contact: Sue Alvarez, sbrock1944@aol.com
SEPTEMBER		
12 Mon	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING at Ellen Hope’s. Contact: Ellen Hope, ellenjhope@aol.com
11 Sun	12 noon	Pros & Cons Presentation , Unitarian Fellowship, 2124 Brewster Avenue, Redwood City. Contact: Nancy Goodban, 650-787-9859
24 Sat	1 pm	Pros & Cons Presentation , The 39ers, 3 Lido Circle, Redwood Shores. Contact: Joanne Bruggemann, joannebrugg@att.net
17 Sat	9:30 am	Our League Fall Kickoff at Lida Urbanek’s, 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton. Speaker and topic TBD.
22 Thurs	12 noon	Book Group Meeting to discuss Hamilton by Ron Chernow. At Lucile Spurlock’s. Contact: Judy Orttung, jorttung@comcast.net